

Monticello High School P.O. Box 69 Monticello, Utah 84535

April 30-May 1, 2008





Utah State Office of Education 250 East 500 South P.O. Box 144200 Salt Lake City, Utah 84114-4200

THE REPORT OF THE VISITING TEAM REVIEWING

Monticello High School P.O. Box 69 Monticello, UT 84535

April 30-May 1, 2008

UTAH STATE OFFICE OF EDUCATION

Patti Harrington, Ed.D. State Superintendent of Public Instruction

DIVISION OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND SCHOOL SUCCESS

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FOREWORD

The major purpose of the accreditation process is to stimulate school growth and improvement so as to increase student achievement.

In these efforts, the school staff makes a comprehensive evaluation of the school's programs, operations, and results. The school determines how actual practices align to stated objectives and resulting outcomes. It is a three-phased evaluation: (1) self-evaluation, (2) on-site evaluation by an external team of educators, and (3) implementation using units of the evaluation to improve the school by effecting thoughtful change.

The evaluation, April 30-May 1, 2008, was conducted because of the school's desire to ensure quality education for all students in the school, and to increase student achievement.

The entire staff of Monticello High School is commended for the time and effort devoted to studying and evaluating the various facets of the total program and to preparing the materials used by the Visiting Team. The excellent leadership given by Principal Scott Shakespeare is also commended.

The staff and administration are congratulated for their desire for excellence at Monticello High School, and also for the professional attitude of all members of the group, which made it possible for them to see areas of weakness and strength and to suggest procedures for bringing about improvements.

While these recommendations may be used to solicit financial support to acquire some of the materials, equipment, and services needed to carry out a more effective program, it is even more important that the faculty and administration utilize them as they continue to evaluate and modify course offerings and administrative and classroom procedures to more dramatically increase student achievement at Monticello High School.

Patti Harrington, Ed.D. State Superintendent of Public Instruction

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MONTICELLO HIGH SCHOOL

ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF

School Administration

Scott Shakespeare				
Counseling				
John Dowell				
Tauna Larson				
Support Staff				
Tanya Lowry	Financial Secretary			
Kathleen Ketron	Attendance Secretary			
Tana Coppin				
Robin Garner	Paraprofessional			
Nancy Helquist	Paraprofessional			
Lucinda Shumway				
Ervin Walker				

Faculty

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Judy Barton	Kati Hall	Scott Shakespeare
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Nathan Chamberlain	Penelope Hanberg	Donna Theobald
Becky Cochran	Jeff Hunt	LaMarr Walker
Karen Cummins	Patti Husted	Ilene Wallace
John Dowell	Gordon Reeve	
Desiree Esplin	David Rice	

MONTICELLO HIGH SCHOOL

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Monticello High School is to develop life-long learners and responsible citizens.

MOTTO

"Rising to a higher standard"

BELIEF STATEMENTS

- 1. Education is our first priority.
- 2. Education is a journey, not a destination, and we are all at different places along the way.
- 3. A school is a community of learners, each member is responsible for his/her own learning, and each is accountable for his/her own choices and actions.
- 4. Each member of the school community should be valued and respected as a unique individual of great worth.
- 5. Learning is achieved through active involvement in a wide variety of situations and experiences; healthy, positive relationships with teachers; and a commitment by all parties to personal growth and excellence.
- 6. Education is advanced through critical and creative thinking, problem solving, practicing good citizenship, producing quality work, and applying knowledge to real-world situations.
- 7. Success in education comes through continuous effort and improvement.
- 8. Teachers, administrators, parents, students, and the community share the responsibility for advancing the school's mission.
- 9. We have great students and great teachers and together we can accomplish anything.

DESIRED RESULTS FOR STUDENT LEARNING (DRSLs)

Thinking and Reasoning

- Construct an argument and defend a position.
- Use appropriate strategies to ask questions and solve problems.

Communication

• Use appropriate communication strategies in given situations: writing, speaking, listening.

Employability

- Demonstrate professionalism by exhibiting responsibility: attendance, deadlines, preparedness and dress.
- Demonstrate professionalism by acting ethically: honesty (refrain from cheating plagiarism), personal action (accepting consequences), respect (to peers, adults, and property), and cooperation.

Date of the visit: April 30-May 1, 2008

MEMBERS OF THE VISITING TEAM

Dr. Nancy L. Jadallah, Eisenhower Junior High School, Granite School District, Chairperson

Toby Bullock, Lone Peak High School, Alpine School District

Michele Kersey, Roy High School, Weber School District

Janice Jones Schroeder, Salt Lake City School District

Michael Sirois, Fort Herriman Middle School, Jordan School District

VISITING TEAM REPORT

MONTICELLO HIGH SCHOOL

CHAPTER 1: SCHOOL PROFILE

Monticello High School is located in lovely, rural San Juan County in southern Utah. The school houses 285 students in grades 7-12. The school is primarily Caucasian, with 18 percent of the students coming from Hispanic and Native American backgrounds. The school is located in a rural setting where agriculture and mining are the major occupations.

a) What significant findings were revealed by the school's analysis of its profile?

The Visiting Team found that there has been a recent turnover in administration, and that the turnover has had positive ramifications in the areas of discipline and school morale.

In spite of the school's rural setting, the students have a wide variety of curricular choices through local course offerings, concurrent classes at the College of Eastern Utah (CEU), and EDNET classes.

In spite of having relatively low CRT and Iowa scores upon leaving elementary school, the students do very well by grade 12 on their CRTs and the Iowa Tests, in terms of percentage of students scoring as proficient in math and language arts.

b) What modifications to the school profile should the school consider for the future?

None noted

c) To what extent does the school's self-study accurately reflect the school's current strengths and limitations?

The self-study, to a large extent, does accurately reflect the school's current strengths and limitations.

Suggested Areas for Further Inquiry:

None noted

CHAPTER 2: NORTHWEST ASSOCIATION OF ACCREDITED SCHOOLS (NAAS) TEACHING AND LEARNING STANDARDS

Mission, Beliefs and Desired Results for Student Learning (DRSLs):

- a) To what degree were the school's mission statement, beliefs and DRSLs developed and/or revised collaboratively by the school community that define a compelling purpose and vision for the school to support student achievement?
 - To a moderate extent, the greater school community, community of Monticello, parents, students, and staff collaborated in a joint effort to define a vision for the school.
- b) To what extent do the school's mission and beliefs align to support the school's DRSLs?
 - To a great extent, the school's mission and belief statements do align to support the school's DRSLs.
- c) Describe the indicators (measures) that have been developed to assess the school's progress in assessing the DRSLs?
 - The DRSL committee has met and begun to develop a rubric for assessing their first DRSL. The committee, via a community and school survey, determined that the school's highest priority was the "Employability" DRSL. The committee has its first draft completed and will have the finished product by the end of the current school year. The other two DRSLs are on the schedule for next year in terms of creating a rubric and indicators of the DRSLs and beginning to implement them throughout the school.
- d) To what extent do the school's mission, beliefs and DRSLs guide the procedures, policies and decisions of the school and are evident in the culture of the school?
 - To a large degree, the school's mission and beliefs guide the school's development of policies and procedure. However, the DRSLs have just recently been developed and therefore are not yet fully developed. The indicators for the DRSLs still need to be written, as does a rubric for measuring the DRSLs.

Curriculum:

a) To what extent does the staff work collaboratively to ensure the curriculum is based on clearly defined standards, the Utah Core Curriculum, reflecting the Utah Life Skills?

The Visiting Team noted that the curriculum is based on clearly defined Utah State Core standards. Collaboration among staff members is on an informal basis. Departments use available time during the school day to discuss the curriculum being taught in the classroom in order to ensure that course offerings have similar content. The results of their collaboration show a positive line of evidence in the school's CRT scores. The school is beginning to move forward with aligning its curriculum with the defined DRSLs. As Monticello High School moves forward in establishing a Professional Learning Community, staff members will be able to work collaboratively to ensure the DRSLs and curriculum align in promoting the mission statement of the school.

The Visiting Team suggests that an allotted time be established for staff members to receive professional development in such practices as Bloom's Taxonomy, differentiated learning styles, essential questioning, and effective instructional strategies to develop and refine appropriate curricula, including ELL, for all students.

Members of the Visiting Team felt there was limited emphasis given to the importance of the world language program. By providing a well developed, defined world language program, the school will provide students with choices that will lead to furthering their education in institutions of higher learning and participation in a global society. The Visiting Team would encourage MSH to continue its efforts in building the school's world language program.

b) To what extent does the curriculum engage **all** students in inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking skills?

The school is beginning to move forward in aligning the curriculum with the defined DRSLs. This process will be enhanced through the development of Professional Learning Communities at Monticello High School. Professional Learning Communities will provide an arena for conversation regarding how to explicitly teach the desired results for student learning.

The Visiting Team suggests that an allotted time be set aside for staff members to collaborate within departments as well as for Professional Learning Communities to develop a cross-curriculum that is relevant and provides knowledge and skill reinforcement to students. Time allotted to work collectively on curriculum and PLCs will enable stakeholders to implement DRSLs into the curriculum and continue moving Monticello High School forward as a community school.

c) To what extent does the teaching staff work collaboratively to support the development of a curriculum that focuses on the school's DRSLs?

The Visiting Team found that, to a small degree, the staff has been collaborating on and supporting the development of a curriculum that focuses on the school's DRSLs. The school just recently defined its DRSLs and is beginning the process

of having collaborative conversations about aligning the curriculum with the newly defined DRSLs.

The staff members at Monticello High School are developing rubrics to measure the DRSLs. This measurement tool will be incorporated into the school-wide curriculum. Monticello High School is working toward a common assessment tool to measure DRSLs.

d) How does the staff use assessments to drive curriculum to ensure that **all** students can reach the intended learning outcomes?

The Visiting Team commends Monticello High School on using a variety of assessments to ensure that students reach the intended learning outcomes. The CRT scores of Monticello High School indicate the collaborative efforts of staff members to improve student learning and assessment results.

Instruction:

a) To what extent do teachers use a variety of instructional strategies to enhance student learning?

To a moderate degree, teachers were observed using a variety of instructional strategies to enhance student learning. A large part of the curriculum is EDNET-based. This exposes students in this relatively small school to a variety of instructional approaches from various teachers statewide that would otherwise be unavailable. Teachers at Monticello High School have to teach many preps; this prompts them to be creative in their approaches. The Visiting Team observed a variety of strategies, including group work, hands-on, and traditional lecture-based approaches. For example, Ms. Husted was observed using a variety of approaches, along with great enthusiasm, to teach a new concept to her students. In general, it was clear that teachers were dedicated to the education of their students.

b) To what extent has the school and the staff developed strategies for instruction that builds the capacity for explicitly teaching the identified DRSL in every classroom?

To a small degree, the staff has begun to develop strategies for instruction that build explicitly teaching the DRSLs into every content area. The staff began with the employability DRSL, and most of the classrooms/content areas have identified within their own classrooms those skills they feel are necessary for students to be employable upon graduation.

The DRSLs primarily reflect goals in personal behavior. There is a citizenship grade along with academics that holds much weight with students. The expected

behaviors are expressed in the school-wide policies, DRSLs, and belief statements. In addition, there are posters in hallways and classrooms reminding students of expected behavior. The community has an expectation that will students learn "professional" behavior – this includes listening, speaking, and behaving for success and being a good global citizen. This came about when the principal and the Community Council (who act as PTA/booster/community liaisons) met with regional business leaders to help coordinate school goals with the business community.

c) To what extent is the school's professional development program guided by identified instructional needs and provides opportunities for teachers to develop and improve their instructional strategies that support student learning?

The Visiting Team found that the school does not have a professional development plan per se, but has begun efforts to instruct the staff on Professional Learning Communities. The principal has sent certain staff members to professional development sessions that introduced the concept of Professional Learning Communities. Next year, those staff members will introduce the book *Learning by Doing* to the staff and begin the process of creating a PLC at Monticello High School.

The district takes two days per month for professional development. The school utilizes two other days. The principal indicated that he was trying to establish a Professional Learning Community-based approach with the staff. The district has sent several staff members to PLC training to become district-wide trainers. This effort is just beginning, but appears to be a genuine effort by the district and the principal to improve education and help the staff to better meet educational goals. Professional collaboration is inherent in the system, due to the intimately small nature of the community and the various subjects/preps most teachers have to facilitate.

d) To what extent are teachers proficient in their content area, knowledgeable about current research on effective instructional approaches and reflective of their own practices?

The San Juan School District is dedicated to teacher proficiency and training in general. Based on the data (CRTs, UBSCT, and college placement), students in this school are doing better than the state average. This, and what was observed by our team, demonstrates a high proficiency level in teacher content area.

e) To what extent does the school effectively implement a well-defined plan for the integration of technology into its curriculum, instruction and assessments?

There's a district-wide plan to keep schools on the cutting edge of technology. A large part of this involves EDNET (or STAR labs, as they call it) and the technology associated with it. This technology enables students to take courses

from various places around the state. In addition, the Visiting Team observed teachers using laptops and multimedia projectors, and the computer labs were in use most periods. The use of technology is consistent with other schools statewide.

Assessment:

a) To what extent has the staff developed classroom or school-wide assessments with performance standards based on clearly articulated expectations for student achievement?

Standardized tests used by the school include the Iowa (ITBS), CRTs, and UBSCT. The Visiting Team observed evidence of individual teachers using a variety of commercial and/or teacher-generated quizzes/tests, as well as alternative assessments including portfolios. There were no observable school-wide assessments with performances standards, but the staff did indicate that conversations had begun on creating common assessments.

However, members of the Visiting Team did observe individual classroom performance standards in place through individual student research-based projects that were directly tied to the core.

b) To what extent does the school have a process to fairly and equitably assess school-wide and individual progress in achieving academic expectations?

The Visiting Team observed that there is not a school-wide process in place that continuously assesses individual progress but looks at yearly school-wide assessments.

The CEU staff member keeps data on each student's overall progress. She has also created two clubs that meet at lunchtime once a week to focus on those students who are struggling academically.

The staff indicated that with the implementation of Professional Learning Communities next fall, one of the areas of focus will be to begin writing common assessments that will hopefully then be used to modify or define appropriate instructional strategies.

c) To what extent does the professional staff use data to assess the success of the school in achieving its academic expectations?

The Visiting Team observed that, to a small extent, staff members used data to make decisions. There was no evidence that the staff was assessing student progress with the intent of using the data to make changes in the curriculum/instructional design.

- d) To what extent does the school's professional development program allow for opportunities for teachers to collaborate in developing a broad range of student assessment strategies?
 - The Visiting Team observed that, to a small degree, the staff collaborated in the development of a broad range of student assessment strategies, and that this is a work in progress and in its beginning stages.
- e) To what extent is there organizational agreement on the use of a school-wide scoring tool?

The Visiting Team met with the DRSL committee and felt that, to a small extent, there was agreement on the use of a school-wide rubric. The first draft had been scripted but has yet to be approved and of refined.

CHAPTER 3: NAAS SUPPORT STANDARDS

Leadership and Organization:

- a) To what extent does the leadership promote quality instruction by fostering an academic learning climate that actively supports teaching and learning?
 - To a large extent, the leadership promotes quality instruction by fostering an academic learning climate that actively supports teaching and learning. The principals are relatively new to the school and are committed to providing training needed for instruction. As a staff, the school has adopted DuFour's *Learning by Doing*, a book on developing Professional Learning Communities. Four Fridays a month, students are released for early-out days. The district provides professional development opportunities and/or meetings for teachers on two of those Fridays. The principal directs the activities on the remaining days. The principal indicated that teachers are given numerous opportunities for professional development.
- b) To what extent does the leadership employ effective decision making that is datadriven, research-based, and collaborative to monitor progress in student achievement and instructional effectiveness?
 - To a great extent, the administration uses data to drive decision making. The school district collects massive amounts of data on the students in this school district and makes this data readily to the staff. A CEU staff member who has worked for over twenty years teaching a careers class to the school's sophomores keeps a file on every student, and uses this data to make decisions about

placement into classes, scholarships, after-school programs, and extra assistance for struggling students.

c) To what extent does the leadership provide skillful stewardship by ensuring management of the organization, operations, resources, allocation and use of resources of the school for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment which aligns with the school goals, DRSLs and school improvement?

To a great degree, the leadership of the school provides skillful management of the organization by providing efficient operations, needed resources, and a safe learning environment. The principal has been on staff for two years and has made some very necessary changes in the behavioral management of the school by toughening the policies for behavioral infractions and by providing needed follow through with the students. The school climate has improved according to all stakeholders.

While fiscal resources are limited, the staff indicated that the leadership was able to find the resources when necessary. Textbooks were current, and teachers indicated that they had the technology necessary to teach their classes and the supplies needed for their classes.

d) To what extent does the school leadership empower the entire school community and encourage commitment, participation, collaboration, and shared responsibility for student learning through meaningful roles in the decision making process?

The teachers and the parents on the School Community Council were emphatic that the leadership of the school listened intently when they voiced either their concerns or the concerns of other parents/patrons and acted appropriately. The leadership of the school encourages collaboration and has made this a goal for the coming year. All of the teachers expressed a need for more collaboration, but felt that they had an active voice in the decision-making process at the school.

e) To what extent has the school established a formal system through which each student has an adult staff member who knows the student well and assists the student in achieving the school-wide DRSLs?

The school has no formal system of advising or mentoring students. However, since the school is small, several staff members regularly check on student progress and identify those students who are struggling. All teachers know the students on a personal level, as the school is so small. The CEU Careers teachers, who have been on staff for over twenty years, have organized two clubs that meet once a week during lunch. The clubs are for students who are unmotivated and/or struggling with school. Additionally, a Homework Club has been established to assist these students academically.

School Services:

This standard is dealt with in the school's NAAS Annual Report, which requires specific responses and information regarding student support, guidance, health, library information, special education and family and community services.

Facilities and Finances:

This standard is addressed yearly in the school's annual report to NAAS, which requires specific responses regarding the physical plant, finances, audit, advertising, etc.

CHAPTER 4: NAAS SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT STANDARD

Culture of Continual Improvement:

- a) To what extent has the school developed and implemented a comprehensive school improvement plan using Collaborating for Student Achievement, the Utah accreditation school improvement process that is reviewed and revised on an ongoing basis?
 - To a small extent, the school has developed a comprehensive school improvement plan that is reviewed and revised on an ongoing basis. The Visiting Team observed that the school is in its infancy in terms of creating a school improvement plan and implementing its component parts.
- b) To what extent does the school build skills and the capacity for improvement through an aligned and ongoing professional development plan focused on the school's goals for improvement?
 - The Visiting Team observed that the school is under the direction of new administrative leadership and is still in a stage of infancy in terms of creating an aligned and ongoing professional development plan that is focused on the school's goals for improvement. The principal has sent some staff members to get training on creating Professional Learning Communities, but this will not be brought back to the staff until next fall. The school will be using the book *Learning by Doing*.
- c) To what extent is the new/revised school-wide action plan adequate in addressing the critical areas for follow-up and is there sufficient commitment to the action plan, school-wide and system-wide?

To a small degree, the school has written an action plan, but the plan lacks the specific action steps that are necessary to address the school's identified goals. Recommendations were made to revisit the action plan and fully design the action steps needed to meet school goals.

d) To what extent does the school create conditions that support productive change and continuous improvement?

The Visiting Team noticed that productive changes have been made over the last two years with the new leadership in place. The process is slow, but there are supportive structures in place that could allow for healthy change. The Visiting Team noted that time is a missing element; given time, the team felt that the leadership would continue to make improvements that were identified.

CHAPTER 5: COMMUNITY BUILDING

a) To what extent does the school foster community building and working relationships within the school?

To a moderate extent, the Visiting Team observed that the school was about community building, and that they valued positive working relationships not only within the staff, but also between staff members and the greater community. The staff indicated its willingness to create Professional Learning Communities and to devise additional time slots and opportunities for collaboration among the staff.

b) To what extent does the school extend the school community through collaborative networks that support student learning?

The School Community Council was observed by the Visiting Team to be a very engaged, connected part of the greater school community. The team felt that the SCC's input was not only valued, but also acted upon. The parents and the SCC were focused on improving the school climate and the curriculum such that the students were afforded every possible advantage and opportunity to show growth.

c) To what extent has the school engaged the school community in a collaborative self-study process on behalf of students?

To a moderate degree, the Visiting Team observed that the school community was included and engaged in the self-study process of behalf of the students at Monticello High School. A couple of teachers were not as involved as the others due to conflicts among multiple teaching assignments, as well as coaching assignments that require them to be gone on overnight trips during their coaching season.

d) How are results of school improvement identified, documented, used and communicated to **all** stakeholders?

The results of the accreditation self-study had just been printed and have not been shared with the staff or the community at this time. The Visiting Team recommended that the findings of the study be shared with all stakeholders at the earliest possible time. The principal indicated that copies would be printed for the library and a copy posted on the school website.

CHAPTER 6: MAJOR COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VISITING TEAM

Commendations:

- The Visiting Team commends the school for focusing on career exploration and organizing the Career Fair.
- The Visiting Team commends the school for the students' positive attitudes and courteous, respectful behavior. The team was very impressed with the global perspective and leadership qualities of the student leaders.
- The Visiting Team commends the administration for making every effort to improve school climate and culture.
- The Visiting Team commends the teaching staff for the students' impressive achievement on the CRTs, considering that the students come to the school below the state average but leave well above the state average.
- The Visiting Team commends the school for the creation of an after school Homework Club to assist struggling students.
- The Visiting Team commends the school for its attempt at offering a variety of courses for students, given the small size of the school. The school is proactive at providing alternative avenues for students to complete their academic pursuits.
- The Visiting Team commends those teachers who have posted their daily instructional objectives clearly in the classroom so that students know explicitly the purpose of the lesson.

Recommendations:

- The Visiting Team recommends that all teachers post their daily instructional objectives on the board so that students understand the purpose of each lesson.
- The Visiting Team highly recommends that the findings of the accreditation process be shared with all stakeholders.
- The Visiting Team highly recommends that the administration build in time during the day for staff collaboration.
- The Visiting Team recommends that the teachers use data to guide or modify instruction to ensure success for all students. The data should also be used as an indicator of needed professional development.
- The Visiting Team recommends that the school continue to identify indicators for the DRSLs, create the rubrics for each DRSL, and identify the respective assessments.
- The Visiting Team recommends that the school continue to explore avenues by which to involve reluctant parents in the school and in their children's education.
- The Visiting Team recommends that the school continue to explore ways to improve communication among staff, parents, and community.
- The Visiting Team recommends that the school revisit the action plan and identify actual steps for improvement by creating SMART goals and common assessments to ensure student achievement.
- The Visiting Team recommends that the school align its professional development plan with the school goals.
- The Visiting Team recommends that the school consider the possibility of
 offering at least two years of world languages to meet the needs of students who
 will attend college.
- The Visiting Team recommends that the school offer a school transition program to ease the stress on elementary students as they enter the high school environment.
- The Visiting Team recommends that teachers be provided with professional development opportunities that promote the use of developmentally appropriate instructional strategies (i.e., hands-on, engaging activities).